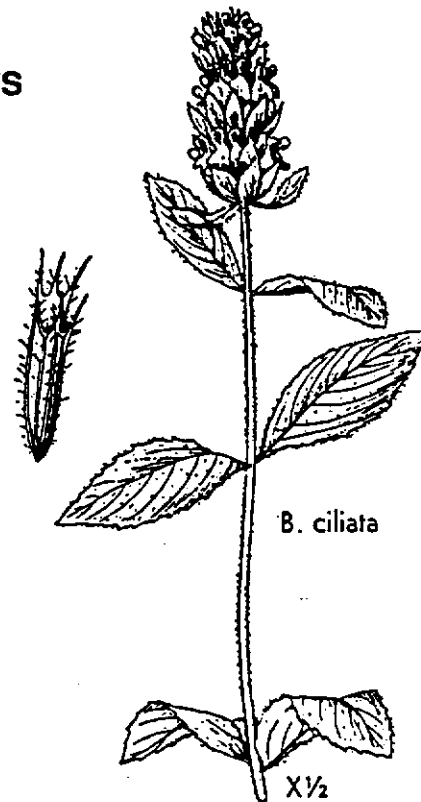


## MASSACHUSETTS ENDANGERED PLANTS

### DOWNY WOOD-MINT (*Blephilia ciliata* L.)

#### Description

Downy Wood-mint, a member of the mint family (Labiatae or Lamiaceae), stands 30-60 cm (1-2 feet) tall with a closely pubescent (hairy) stem. The nearly odorless principle leaves measure 3-6 cm (1.2-2.4 inches) long, are almost sessile (without a stalk), are narrowed at their base, and are whitish-downy beneath. In contrast, leaves of vegetative offshoots have long petioles (stalks to the leafblade) and are nearly elliptical or oval. The calyx (outer floral envelope) is two-lipped and bilaterally symmetrical with three spine tipped teeth on the upper side and two shorter blunter teeth on the lower side. The 11-14 mm long corollas are hairy, pink to bluish with purple spots, and are arranged in 1-5 whorls on the upper part of the stem. Each whorl has at its base a row of fringed, colorful bracts. Flowering season is mid June-mid July. *Blephilia ciliata* gets its name from the Greek *blepharis* (the eyelash) in reference to the hairy fringe of the bracts.



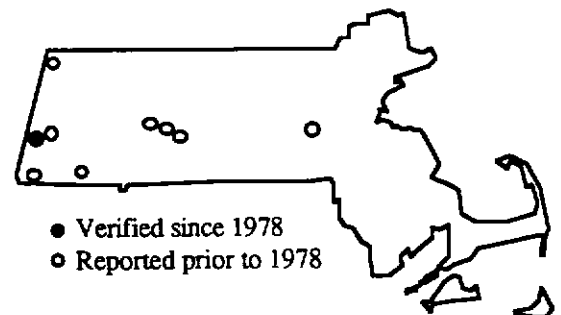
Gleason The New Britton and Brown Illustrated Flora of the Northeastern U.S. and Adjacent Canada. NY Botanical Garden, 1952.

#### Similar Species

*B. ciliata* resembles Hairy Wood-mint (*B. hirsuta*), but *B. hirsuta* is often taller, has whitish flowers, narrower bracts, a shorter, lower calyx, and the lobes don't reach the upper sinuses. Wild Basil (*Satureja vulgaris*) is often mistaken for Downy Wood-mint and can be found in the same habitat. It is usually no more than 1 foot tall, has uniformly pink



 Range of Downy Wood-mint



Massachusetts Distribution by Town

## DOWNY WOOD-MINT (continued)

### Habitat in Massachusetts

Downy Wood-mint is usually found in moist or dry regenerating woods, thickets, and openings with open-filtered light. One subpopulation of the one occurrence in Massachusetts is in open woods on a thickety edge of a trail with a canopy of White Ash, White Pine, and Quaking Aspen; a shrub border of Dogwood (Cornus alternifolia), Speckled Alder (Alnus rugosa), and Wild Grape (Vitis sp.); and many herbs and weedy species: Sweet Clover (Melilotus), Goldenrod (Solidago), Horse Mint (Monarda), Fever Wort (Triosteum), and Wind-flower (Anemone). Another subpopulation is found in an abandoned quarry, in an open, grassy, weedy strip with similar associated plants.

### Range

Downy Wood-mint occurs from Massachusetts to southern Michigan and Wisconsin, south to Georgia, Mississippi, and Arkansas.

### Population Status

Downy Wood-mint is listed as "Endangered" in Massachusetts. There has been only one recent verified occurrence while historically (prior to 1978), 9 occurrences were reported. Forest succession, which may shade out Downy Wood Mint, poses a threat to the existing population in Massachusetts. Downy Wood-mint is listed as rare in Canada, Delaware, Iowa, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, and Vermont.